

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1                   1.     A method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in  
2 bulk, the method comprising:  
3                   receiving a first electronic and a second electronic submission;  
4                   extracting a first portion from the first electronic submission and a second  
5 portion from the second electronic submission;  
6                   determining a first code for the first portion and a second code for the  
7 second portion, wherein the first code is indicative of the first portion and the second code  
8 is indicative of the second portion;  
9                   comparing the first code to the second code; and  
10                  filtering the second electronic submission in response to comparing the  
11 first code to the second code.

1                   2.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein the filtering of the second electronic submission  
3 comprises storing the second electronic submission in a bulk mail folder.

1                   3.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein the first portion is extracted from visible text in the  
3 first electronic submission.

1                   4.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 1, the method further comprising:  
3                   modifying a count in response to the comparing of the first code with the  
4 second code;  
5                   determining if the count reaches a threshold;  
6                   comparing a third code associated with a third message; and  
7                   filtering the third message if the third code matches the second code.

1                   5.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2 in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein the first portion is related the first code by one of a  
3 hash function, a checksum and a cyclic redundancy check (CRC).

1                   6.       The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2   in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein each of the first and second codes is represented in less  
3   bits than a corresponding portion.

1                   7.       The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2   in bulk recited in claim 1, wherein the first and second electronic submissions are chosen  
3   from the group consisting of an electronic mail message, a chat room comment, an instant  
4   message, a newsgroup posting, an electronic forum posting, a message board posting, and  
5   a classified advertisement.

8. A method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in bulk, the method comprising:

- receiving a first electronic submission;
- extracting a first portion from the first electronic submission;
- determining at least a first code for the first portion, wherein the first code is indicative of the first portion;
- receiving a second electronic submission;
- extracting a second portion from the second electronic submission;
- determining at least a second code for the second portion, wherein the second code is indicative of the second portion;
- comparing the first code with the second code;
- modifying a count in response to the comparing of the first code with the second code;
- determining if the count reaches a threshold; and
- filtering subsequent electronic submissions similar to the first electronic submission in response to determining if the count reaches the threshold.

1                   9.       The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2   in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein the filtering subsequent electronic submissions  
3   comprises storing the subsequent electronic submissions in a bulk mail folder.

1                    10.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2     in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein the first and second codes are each a number  
3     represented in a same number of bits.

1                   11.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2     in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein the first portion is related the first code by one of a  
3     hash function, a checksum and a cyclic redundancy check (CRC).

1                   12.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2     in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein each of the first and second codes is represented in less  
3     bits than a corresponding portion.

1                   13.     The method for blocking electronic text communication distributed  
2     in bulk recited in claim 8, wherein the first and second electronic submissions are chosen  
3     from the group consisting of an electronic mail message, a chat room comment, an instant  
4     message, a newsgroup posting, an electronic forum posting, a message board posting, and  
5     a classified advertisement.

1                   14.     A method for blocking electronic text communication distributed in  
2     bulk, the method comprising:  
3                   receiving a first electronic submission;  
4                   extracting a first plurality of portions from the first electronic submission;  
5                   determining a first plurality of codes for the first plurality of portions,  
6     wherein each of the first plurality of codes is indicative of its respective portion;  
7                   receiving a second electronic submission;  
8                   extracting a second plurality of portions from the second electronic  
9     submission;  
10                  determining a second plurality of codes for the second plurality of  
11     portions, wherein each of the second plurality of codes is indicative of its respective  
12     portion;  
13                  comparing the first plurality of codes with the second plurality of codes;  
14                  modifying a count in response to the comparing of the first plurality of  
15     codes with the second plurality of codes;  
16                  determining if the count reaches a threshold; and  
17                  filtering similar electronic submissions in response to determining if the  
18     count reaches the threshold.

